

# Winter 2019—2020

# PATHWAYS

PHOTO BY PAUL WEBB, ST. CLAIR CO MGA

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**AMGA Website**  
[alabamamg.org](http://alabamamg.org)



## AMGA PRESIDENT

Michael Thomason



Happy Holidays,  
I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family and friends and are rested up and ready for Christmas and New Year's.

This time of year, for me, brings on a period of reflection of the past year and anticipation of the New Year. During these cold winter months, I plan my garden, repair my tools and patiently wait on spring.

One thing I hope you are planning on is attending our annual conference. This year

it will arrive a little earlier than most years. Mark your calendars for *Gardening with 2020 Vision*, March 30-April 1, 2020, hosted by the Mobile Master Gardeners Association. Come early on the weekend prior to experience the *Festival of Flowers* at the Providence Hospital. Also, remember that the Annual Business Meeting is held during the conference. Be sure to be present for that and cast your vote for the new At Large Board of Directors for 2020-2023.

Thank you for an outstanding year,  
Michael Thomason

## FROM THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Myra Lassere



I have found gardeners to be generous people throughout Alabama and the surrounding areas. They are so eager to offer ideas and advice, plus seeds and cuttings from their flower bed or garden patch. They even share the fruitful bounty of their labor. This is a description of you, as Master Gardeners, and I am thankful to know you!

As falling leaves turn brown and a chill fills the crisp winter air, we look through our garden books and seed catalogs planning ahead. Take time now to peruse the offerings that Mobile County will present to all of

us in March. Go early and enjoy the wonders of the Festival of Flowers, the beauty of Bellingrath Gardens, the lovely Mobile Botanical Gardens and much, much more. Experience the culinary delights the city has to tempt our palates. As my family likes to say "See Food (seafood) and eat it!" As Master Gardeners, I know we like to eat.

So, as we bid a fond adieu to 2019, I wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Blessed one too. Be safe in your journeys, and I look forward to 2020 with a Gardening Vision!

To Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow.

Myra

## **AMGA ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Sondra Henley, Chair

The 2020 Advisory Council officers are Chair: Sondra Henley, Vice-Chair: Fletcher Harvey, Secretary: Elousia Stokes, and Parliamentarian: Debbie Boutelier.

On **February 4**, there will be a general meeting with a Round Table discussion, and the spotlight speaker will be Mary Howe - Dues Tracker (send your county's Membership Coordinator with your representative), and a Crock-Pot luncheon.

On May 5, the meeting will spotlight Michael Thomason speaking on AMGA.

The August 4 and November 3, spotlights will be announced later.

All meetings will be held at Petals from the Past and will start at 10:00 am.

## **AMGA AWARDS**

Devonne Ellis, Chair

January 2020 will be here before you know it. The awards for next year will be presented in Mobile at the 2020 AMGA Annual Conference, March 30—April 1. All associations are encouraged to submit award nominations by the deadline – **January 31, 2020**.

Order forms for both Reach for the Stars and Advanced Badges and Stars Awards are found by going to alabamamg.org, looking under “AMGA Publications and Forms,” and clicking on “AMGA Forms.” Select and print the forms needed. Instructions are on the forms. Checks should be made out to AMGA and submitted with the order form to the **Reach for the Stars Chair, Lee Ann Marona**, 292 Magnolia Ridge, Millbrook, AL 36054. Please do not send checks to the AMGA Treasurer. You can reach Lee Ann at, [amgastars@gmail.com](mailto:amgastars@gmail.com).

**Advanced Badges and Stars Awards order forms are sent to Devonne Ellis, [devoellis@msn.com](mailto:devoellis@msn.com).** Information and instructions for the other award nominations are found on the same website, alabamamg.org, again under “AMGA Publications and Forms.” To see the requirements for submissions, select “AMGA Awards and Criteria.” Each award is listed separately with its unique instructions. Please follow those instructions.

The Outstanding Newsletter Award has changed this year to include the website.

There are three categories:

- 1) Associations with AMGA members without a website,
- 2) Associations up to fifty-nine (59) AMGA members with a website and
- 3) Sixty (60) and above AMGA members with a website.

They will be judged by the same criteria which include objectives (purpose), calendar of events and meetings, projects, news/Public Relations Stories, contact information, attractiveness with color/art, photographs of activities, links (web addresses) to bylaws, AMGA Newsletters and ACES web page. **Those without a website will submit newsletters by email and mail. Those with websites will submit newsletters by mail and send a link to your website.** Entries for Outstanding Newsletter Award should be for the association’s **March and September** Issues. All associations are encouraged to make submissions in the appropriate category. If your association has previously won this award, you must wait three years before your next submission.

One important note to remember – all nominees for AMGA awards, except for the Gary Murray Outstanding Service Award, honoring Non-Master Gardeners, **must be current AMGA members in good standing.** Please help AMGA reward its most deserving members! If you have any questions, feel free to contact **Devonne Ellis, AMGA Awards Chair, [devoellis@msn.com](mailto:devoellis@msn.com).**

## AMGA COMMUNICATIONS

Sue Khoury, Chair



### Website Initiative

Our AMGA website is long overdue for an overhaul. In the coming months, a professional web services company will build a new, fresh, reorganized site that will be more user-friendly and easier to maintain. It will still be a WordPress™ site because WordPress enables easier edits and updates. But it will look more modern and will feel more efficient. It will also carry our “brand” – our logo - and a consistent look and feel throughout the site.

Many people have contributed to the AMGA website over the years, and they've done a terrific job. When I took over Communications in the spring, I was blessed to have Frieda Romanchuk keeping the site up to date and helping me get up to speed. She's been a tremendous help, and I'll miss her insight and support. Frieda is moving to Florida, so we'll have a new web team in 2020: Audrey Giles (Chilton County), Trisha Williams (Chilton County), and Jane Jones (MGNA) have agreed to join forces to post documents, photos, and updates to the website. I'm looking forward to having such capable team members!

If you have suggestions for the new website, now is the time to get them to me. Send them to [suekhoury@knology.net](mailto:suekhoury@knology.net), and we'll be happy to consider them.

And while I'm handing out accolades, please put your hands together for our Newsletter Editor-In-Chief Patricia Peoples and her wonderful team of editors and proofreaders as they wrap up another year of fabulous articles and photos!

I hope you all have a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season filled with family, friends, and dreams of the 2020 gardening season!

## AMGA NEWSLETTER

Patricia Peoples, Editor

Another year is quickly coming to an end, and I look forward to continuing as your newsletter editor for 2020, along with Patricia Patty and Carolyn Wade. They are doing an excellent job keeping my “job” comfortable to complete. Each association submitting an article makes for a fantastic newsletter. There is always someone wanting to know what the “rules” entail. You may find that information by going to alabamamg.org and looking for AMGA Publications & Forms. Under that heading you will find AMGA Newsletter Criteria which will tell you everything you want to know. But I don't mind answering questions if you need more help. Anyone in your MG group can submit an article! I'm sure your president would appreciate you stepping up to the plate and giving it a go! At the AC meetings and the Board meetings, I hear how many members enjoy hearing about what is going on in other counties and it gives other associations ideas for their programs. Please keep up the excellent work!

*We will open the book. Its pages are blank.*

*We are going to put words on them ourselves.*

*The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day.*

Edith Lovejoy Pierce

## AMGA NOMINATIONS

Jim Harris, Chair

Paula Seamon

Katherine Musso

We are still in need of an Assistant Treasurer for AMGA. If you are interested or would like

further information, please contact one of the committee members.

Jim Harris, Chair

## BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE — TERM EXPIRES 2023

### Lavella "Lyn" Webb



My husband and I live in a small town in Calhoun County. Calhoun County did not have enough people sign up for a Master Gardener class, so I was able to join Chilton County 2019 Master Gardener class.

Becoming a Master Gardener proved to be a wonderful thing for me. I met so many fantastic people that I most likely would never have crossed paths with otherwise. Due to Chilton County being a long drive for volunteer opportunities, I reached out to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, where I regularly work with many of the Jefferson County Master Gardeners. I am a member of Calhoun County Master Gardeners and am delighted to call many more Master Gardeners "friends."

The first Master Gardener I knew about was a customer on my mail route. While walking around his beautiful gardens, he told me about being a Master Gardener and the importance to him in teaching others about gardening. I can remember that day so well because I was hooked. I knew I wanted to build a knowledge base to help me be able to share my love for plants.

That customer on my mail route was Mr. Lenn Ellis, who was on the first Board of the Alabama Master Gardeners. Mr. Ellis has been deceased for several years, but I hope to honor his memory by continuing his work on the Alabama Master Gardener Board.

### Anthony Yarbrough



I have lived most of my life in Autauga County. I worked on the family farm until I graduated from Autauga County High School and Auburn University with a degree in Agriculture Business and Economics. I have had several jobs working for Nabisco, Prattville Water Works Board, Prattville Wastewater, Continental Moss-Gordon, and the State of Alabama for 19 years in the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and retired in 2002. I played in the Auburn University Band for four years, and in the Alabama National Guard band for 23 years. I am currently playing in the Prattville Pops Community Band, and the Upbeats Jazz Band. I play and teach tennis. My wife and I married in 1973 and have three daughters, two sons-in-law, and four grandchildren. I attend Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Prattville, where I have been a member since 1956.

I became a Master Gardener in 2009. Achievements include president of the Autauga County Association, Master Gardener of the year for Autauga County, Hummingbird awards, and received the Best Newsletter of the year award.

I have taught many gardening classes to civic groups, garden clubs, home improvement expos, and Extension associations. I am currently working on my advanced certification in destructive insects in the Garden.

## **AMGA ENDOWMENT**

Rose McCauley, Chair

The AMGA Graduate Student Endowment provides scholarship funding for graduate Horticulture students at Auburn University. Donations from local Master Gardener associations make these scholarships possible. Contributions for 2019 will be reported at the Annual AMGA Conference in Mobile in 2020. At that time, we will also announce the undergraduate and graduate recipients for the 2019-2020 school year. Checks for the Endowment should be made out to AMGA and sent to Roger Clarke, AMGA Treasurer, at 527 Greenbrier Way, Birmingham, AL 35244. Please include an address so the Auburn Foundation can send a thank you letter. These scholarships and awards are very much appreciated by the students who receive them.

## **AMGA MEMBERSHIP**

Mary Howe, Chair

AMGA will finish 2019 with a paid and lifetime membership of 1,986. Several discrepancies still exist between membership dues submitted to the Treasurer and the Dues Tracker postings so that the actual count may differ from the reported total. Dues collection for 2020 should be underway, and the dues payments need to be posted in the Dues Tracker database when payments are sent to the AMGA Treasurer. Each association should have at least one individual with access to the Dues Tracker (and preferably at least one alternate administrator). If your association does not have a Dues Tracker administrator or needs to make a change in the individuals with access, please send the information to [amgamembership@gmail.com](mailto:amgamembership@gmail.com). The AMGA website ([alabamamg.org](http://alabamamg.org)) includes an information sheet on use of Dues Tracker. Also use this email address for membership or Dues Tracker questions.

If your association has not received membership cards for 2020 or needs additional cards, please provide a name and address for mailing to the AMGA Membership email address above.

**Thank you to our friends in the Alabama Master Gardener Association** for your expressions of sympathy in the loss of my husband on November 4. He was very pleased to be given the title of Honorary Master Gardener and enjoyed seeing you at the state conventions. Many years ago, we were able to attend the first three national conventions. He was a wonderful partner for 72 years and always supportive of our three children. Mary Lou McNabb

## **AMGA PROJECT FUNDING**

Sheila Bolen, Chair

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, or so the song says. What comes after Christmas? GARDENING!! Where is this heading? The AMGA state conference is earlier this year than the last two years, so it's time to get the gardening projects planned. Along with that goes Project Funding. AMGA has monies available for your LMGA projects or needs. How do you get some of these monies? Go to <https://alabamamg.org/>; click on AMGA Project Funding Program on the right side of the page. There you will find information and guidelines on how to apply for a grant. It's not hard; it just takes a little paperwork and a good plan. I have received one application thus far and am hoping to get more applications soon. The deadline for applying is January 15. 2020. At that time the Project Funding Committee will study each application and decide which LMGA(s) receive grant money. The grants rewarded will be announced at the AMGA conference March 30 – April 1, 2020. Soooo, get those applications into me, Sheila Bolen, Project Funding Chairperson, at [sheilabolen@hotmail.com](mailto:sheilabolen@hotmail.com).

Oh yeah – MERRY CHRISTMAS!

## **AMGA TREASURER**

Roger Clarke, Treasurer

### 2019 TREASURERS REPORT

Alabama Master Gardeners Association, Inc., will end 2019 in a very strong financial position.

The association has in excess of \$130,000 on deposit with Regions Bank.

The association has no liabilities.

2019 included a very successful annual conference and fall seminar, each adding to our fund balance.

A balance sheet and a Statement of Revenues and Expenses as of December 31, 2019, and for the year then ended, will be available in early January 2020. These statements will be presented at the annual conference in Mobile.

The association has used QuickBooks to maintain its financial records for several years. We upgraded to an online version in 2019, which will give us more flexibility and additional analytical tools.

I want to thank James Whitson Jr., who was the treasurer for the first half of 2019, for the invaluable work he did, and on which I built for the second half of the year.

*An optimist stays up until midnight*

*to see the new year in.*

*A pessimist stays up*

*to make sure the old year leaves.*

William E. Vaughan

## MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

In the winter 2019 issue of Pathways, I wrote about teamwork and the necessity for everyone to feel responsible toward a successful MG program. This year, I send a similar message. What is your volunteer gift? What is your passion in educational outreach? How do you connect your MG volunteer work to Extension? I, we, need your help waving the flag and promoting the Extension-MG connection!

One such group that helps strengthen this connection is our Extension-MG Steering Committee. First, here's the purpose of this committee:

To establish program policies

To identify and develop program information and materials, and revise existing information and materials as needed

To evaluate and give oversight to the growth and development of the MG program toward its mission and purpose

Over the last 15 years, this Committee has contributed to and reviewed Ch. 1 in the MG Training Handbook –created the Advanced MG outline and guide – authored a MG Mentoring guide with models from locally applied strategies – assisted statewide Helpline coordination – Search for Excellence Guide and Application-defined categories for the online Service Report – Volunteer Hours Categories Guide and Calculating Service Hours guide – defined MG roles assisting Intern training classes – standardized MG Intern testing – a phone survey as a preliminary step in defining MG outreach value – collected promotional materials for the new ACES-MG web site – and created the Annual Survey of Local MGAs.

Our current Committee members are Amanda Redman (Blount MGA), Phyllis Clay (Jefferson MGA), Skip Coulter (Chilton MGA), Harriet Jackson (Chilton MGA), Nancy Waggoner (Autauga MGA), Mallory Kelley (Extension Home Grounds REA), and me (chair).

The Extension-MG Steering Committee's 2019 focus was to develop a toolbox that supports volunteer outreach and grows community support for Extension Home Grounds. Projects included: building an online library of outreach resources (PowerPoints, program outlines, speaker resources, etc.) – develop gardening competition for the public (introduce people to Extension and the MG program) – and a guide to building successful MG programs (i.e., successful Extension-MG partnerships). More news as the year progresses.

We feel these projects will help further the value image of the MG Program, promote the kinship between MGs and Extension, and illustrate our mission in action.

I hope you replied to the third Annual Survey of Local MGAs and shared one of your success stories. These will be used in our annual report to USDA and Extension Administration. If you forgot, don't delay and send ASAP or call me with any questions.

We all have a responsibility to our program's success. Everything you do supports the future of our Master Gardener family. Thank you all for your volunteer energy.





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**Got Questions**

**?**

**We've Got Answers**

**aces.edu/questions**

**AMGA Website**

**Alabamamg.org**

**SPRING 2020 ARTICLES DUE MARCH 15 2020**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**TERMS 2019—2021**

**PRESIDENT:** Michael Thomason,  
Shoals

**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Myra Lassere,  
Baldwin

**SECRETARY:** Sherilyn Osborne, Blount  
**TREASURER:** Roger Clarke, Jefferson

**BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE**

**TERM 2017-2020**

Devonne Ellis, Wiregrass  
Mary Howe, MGNA

**TERM 2018-2021**

Pat Cosgrove, Jefferson  
Tillie Morgan, Cherokee  
Paula Seamon, Autauga

**TERM 2019-2022**

Sue Khoury, MGNA  
Sheila Bolen, East Central

**AMGA COMMITTEES**

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**PATHWAYS EDITOR:** Patricia Peoples,  
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**AMGA WEBMASTER:** Sue Khoury,  
MGNA

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**RECORDS & RETENTION COMMITTEE**

**CHAIR:** Michael Thomason, Shoals

**STATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE**

**CHAIR:** Myra Lassere, Baldwin

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEES**

2020 Mobile CO MGA, Rene' Reibling  
& Judy Stout

2021 Calhoun Co MGA, Skeeter Sims  
& Dick Pritchett

2022 Capital City MGA, Janice  
Jackson & Margaret Cully.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**COMMITTEE**

**CHAIR:** Kerry Smith State MG Program

**ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**CHAIR:** Sondra Henley, Chilton

**WEBSITE INFO APPROVAL:**

Michael Thomason, Myra Lassere, Sue Khoury